

March 8, 2011 Water Supply Forecast Discussion

This forecast includes observed conditions through the morning of March 8, 2011.

<http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/iodir/B120UP>

Forecast Summary:

The projected median April-July runoff now ranges from 92 percent (Sacramento River at Bend Bridge) to 147 percent (Kern River). All forecasts have gone up since March 1, 2011. The American River forecast increased by 10 percent whereas the Kings River increased by 3 percent. Forecasts increased by 6 percent, on average.

Runoff:

The current March unimpaired runoff rates are over 90 percent for all basins, excluding the Trinity and Feather basins. The Cosumnes River is flowing at the greatest rate, 135 percent of average while the Trinity and Feather Rivers are flowing at the lowest rates of 61 and 78 percent of average, respectively.

Precipitation:

The Northern Sierra 8-Station Index increased by 2.7 inches from March 1 to March 10. The seasonal total of 45.0 inches is now about 122 percent of average to date and 90 percent of an average water year. The San Joaquin 5-Station Index also had the same gains, 2.7 inches from March 1 to March 10. These gains bring the Index to 152% of average to date and 109 percent of the water year average.

Snowpack:

According to the March 8 snow sensor data, statewide snowpack stands at 119 percent of the April 1 average and 128 percent of average to date. Regionally, the Northern Sierra, Central Sierra, and Southern Sierra measure 118, 128, and 138 percent of average to date.

Weather and Climate Outlooks:

The NWS Climate Prediction Center's (CPC) 30-day outlook for March, last updated on February 28, 2011, suggests increased chances of below normal temperatures for all of California except for the Owens River Valley and the Mojave Desert region. The same outlook calls for increased chances of above normal precipitation for the northern third of the state including all areas of the Sierra Nevada from Lake Tahoe northward. Equal chances of above or below normal precipitation are expected for the central third of the state. For the southern third of the state, including the Colorado River region, the outlook calls for increased chances of below normal precipitation.

The CPC's three month outlook (March through May) was last updated February 17, 2011. This outlook suggests increased chances of below normal temperatures over a region north of Monterey Bay and Lake Tahoe. Above normal temperatures are expected over a region east of a line from Bishop to Mexicali, Mexico. Equal chances of above or below normal temperatures are expected elsewhere. The same outlook calls for increased chances of below normal precipitation for the southern half of the state including all areas of the Sierra Nevada south of Lake Tahoe. Equal chances of above or below normal precipitation are forecasted elsewhere.

The 6-day forecast, issued today, indicates substantial precipitation. The Sacramento River Region may receive the greatest amount of precipitation, up to 4.5 inches, over this period.

Whereas the San Joaquin and Tulare Lake regions may receive up to 1 inch of precipitation. The freezing levels for this period will be between 5,000 and 7,500 feet for the Sacramento River Region and 8,000 to 10,000 feet for Tulare Lake and San Joaquin Region.

Next Update:

The next Bulletin 120 forecast update will be produced for conditions on March 15, 2011, and will be available by "St Patrick's Day", Thursday, March 17, 2011. If you need guidance before then, or have any questions, please contact us:

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Important Links

Full Natural Flow Data:

Daily FNF

http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/snowsurvey_ro/FNF

Monthly FNF

http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/snowsurvey_ro/FNFSUM

Seasonal FNF

http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/snowsurvey_ro/FLOWOUT

Precipitation Data:

Northern Sierra 8-Station Precipitation Tabulation Table

http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/products/8-Stations_Tab.pdf

San Joaquin 5-Station Precipitation Tabulation Table

http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/products/5-Stations_Tab.pdf

2011 WY Precipitation Summary

<http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/precip/PRECIPSUM>

Snow Data:

Latest Snow Sensor Report

<http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/snow/PAGE6>

Latest Statewide Summary of Snow Water Equivalents

<http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/snow/DLYSWEQ>

Monthly Snow Course Report

<http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/snow/COURSES>

Extended Regional Forecasts:

California Nevada River Forecast Center 6 Day QPF and Snow Level Forecast

<http://www.cnrfc.noaa.gov/awipsProducts/RNOHD6RSA.php>

Climate Prediction Center One-Month Outlook Forecasts

<http://www.cpc.noaa.gov/products/predictions/30day/>

Climate Prediction Center Three-Month Outlook Forecasts

<http://www.cpc.noaa.gov/products/predictions/90day/>

Drought Information:

California Drought Information

<http://www.water.ca.gov/drought/>

U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook

http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/expert_assessment/seasonal_drought.htm